

The last thing I want to say is this: If you look around in this vast, wonderful, magnificent sea of people, you will see people whose ancestors came from all different places. When I went to see the Olympics and to start them off and I met with the American Olympic team, it made chills run up and down my spine. I thought to myself, if these kids didn't have the American uniform on and they were just walking out there in the Olympic Village, you wouldn't have a clue where they were from. You'd think, well, that person is on the African team and that one's on the Korean team, and that one's on the Japanese team, and that one's from the Caribbean somewhere, and this one's from Latin America, and the other one's from Europe, and there's somebody from Scandinavia. You can be from any base and be American.

And I think one reason we like the Olympics is that everybody gets a chance, everybody plays by the rules, you don't get anywhere by badmouthing your opponent, you can't get a medal if you break your opponent's legs and break the rules. You just got to reach down deep and do the right thing. And even if you don't win, you're better off for having tried. That's the America I'm trying to build. That's the America I want you to have.

So I want you to think about it. I want you to think about it because we have to fight that. There are always, always going to be people that'll try to pit us against one another, look down on this group or that group or the other group. And we have to say no. We have to say no. If we share the same values and we're willing to show up and be law-abiding citizens, we've all got a role to play and all got a place in America of the 21st century. There is not a nation on Earth as well-positioned for the next century as the United States.

Many of you in this audience tonight will do jobs that have not been invented yet. Many of you will do things that have not been imagined yet. The best days of this country are still before us. You will have opportunities no previous generation of people have ever had in all of human history if—if—we all do our jobs to make opportunity available to everybody; to be good, responsible citizens

and to realize that we have to do this together.

We are a great country when we are together. If we let people divide us and make us small and make us look down on one another, we will never reach our potential. But if you look around this sea of folks tonight and you say, they're all my brothers and sisters, we're all Americans and we are still the greatest country in human history and our best days are still ahead, then they will be. Will you help me? Will you walk with me? Will you stay with me for 70 days and on for 4 years and on into the 21st century?

Thank you, and God bless you all. Good night. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 p.m. at West Holden Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Letha Miller, student, and M. Peter McPherson, president, Michigan State University; Bob Weiss, chairman, Michigan State University Board; Mayor David Hollister of Lansing; and Mayor Douglas Jester of East Lansing. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in Battle Creek, Michigan

August 28, 1996

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much. I want to thank the people over across the street—we know you're there; we're glad you're here. Thank you. I would like to thank Kathy Bloch for her introduction and for the work she's done to support our efforts to stop the marketing, the advertising, and the distribution and the sales of tobacco to young people. That's not legal, and it ought to stop. Three thousand of our young people a day start to smoke, and 1,000 of them will die sooner because of it. It's the biggest public health problem in the country, and I think it's a good thing that Americans have taken action on it again, thanks largely to people like Kathy Block and young people themselves who have asked us to help them protect a healthy future for them, and I thank her for it. Thank you, Mark Schauer, for your work and your candidacy. Thank you, Kim Tunnick, I thought you gave a good, rousing speech.

I thought to myself when I heard Kim talking, now, if he'd been in Congress, that

would have been one more vote against that budget that slashed Medicare by \$270 billion and took away the guarantee of health care to the elderly in nursing homes, to poor children, to pregnant mothers, and to families with members with disabilities. He would have stopped that.

He would not have voted to cut education and the environment or to raise taxes on the lowest income working people or to let \$15 billion be taken out of worker pension funds. All that was in that budget in 1995 that I vetoed. And I never did hear our friends in San Diego talking about that when they were bragging about how moderate and nice and broadminded they were. So I was glad to hear Kim remind you that there was a budget battle last year. I did veto it, and thanks to Carl Levin and others, we sustained that veto. It would be a good thing to have somebody in the Congress that wanted to balance the budget and protect our values. I thank you for doing that, sir.

I would like to introduce another Michigan Congressman who's here with me. He represents the Upper Peninsula, and I think he is one of the most dedicated, upright, hard-working people in the Congress: Congressman Bart Stupak and his wife are both here. Congressman Stupak, come out here and wave to the folks. Governor Jim Blanchard is here, who was the very distinguished Ambassador to Canada. I thank you, Governor Blanchard. Attorney General Frank Kelley is here. I thank you, Frank, for coming and for your work. Frank Garrison, the head of the Michigan AFL-CIO is here with us. And I want to say a very special word of thanks to another son of Michigan who is here, who just completed his term as the president of the National Education Association, Keith Geiger, who was a fearless and wonderful advocate for America's teachers. Thank you, Keith Geiger, for being here.

Finally, I'd like to thank Senator Carl Levin for his leadership for Michigan and America, for his fight for America's jobs and his fight for ethics in Government, for his fight to give America the kind of direction that it needs and deserves. He deserves your reelection for his service, and I hope you'll give it to him.

I'd like to thank the Battle Creek High Band. Thank you very much for being here. And I thank the saxophone selection for raising your horns. You look good over there. Well, the rest of you can raise your horns; you don't have to be a saxophone player.

I thank Mayor Deering, from Battle Creek, and the principal of Battle Creek High School, Bruce Barney; the head of the local community action agency, Sherry Keys-Hebron; the president of the AFL-CIO for South Central Michigan, Richard France; Reverend Albert Thomas; and all the others who had anything to do with this event today, including the Washington Heights Gospel Ministry who'll give us music at the end of this event. Thank you all very much.

Folks, I'm glad to be the first President in Battle Creek since President Johnson was here in 1965. I'm glad to be the first President to come into Battle Creek on a train since President Taft was here in 1911.

This train started in West Virginia and went into Kentucky. Then we went all over Ohio. Yesterday morning, we started in Toledo and then worked our way into Michigan to Wyandotte to Royal Oak to Pontiac and last night to a rally at Michigan State University where there were over 20,000 people. It was an amazing event.

I took this train to Chicago, the 21st Century Express, for two reasons. First of all, I wanted to get a chance, as I go to Chicago to accept the nomination of my party for President and begin the last and perhaps the most important campaign of my life, to look into the faces, into the eyes, into the hearts of the people of America in the heartland for whom I have worked and fought these last 4 years. I wanted to see you to remember why we're doing all this.

And secondly, I wanted to make the point that our train is not only on the right track to Chicago, it's on the right track to the 21st century. And we need to stay on that track. But as one of these wonderful signs said, there is more to do. I was very proud of my wife last night at the Democratic Convention because she talked about the work she's done for the last 25 years, what we learned about it from raising our own daughter, and the fact that there is more to do.

Audience members. Hillary in 2000!

The President. Let me say very briefly, I want to speak with you, and I want to ask you to do something for me. I want you to vote for me, of course. I want you to stay with us. But I want to talk to you just a few moments this morning about what we've done and where we're going and ask you to spend the next 70 days talking to your friends and neighbors about it.

I ran for President 4 years ago because I wanted to lead our country into the 21st century with all Americans having the chance to live out their dreams. I ran for President because I didn't like the fact that we had high unemployment, stagnant wages; we were not meeting our challenges. Cynicism was on the rise. Middle class dreams were being dashed, and I knew we could do better. I knew we could do better.

So I went before the American people and said: I have a simple strategy. I want to create a country in which there is opportunity for everyone, responsibility from everyone, and where everyone who is willing to work hard and do the right thing without regard to their race, their gender, where they come from, or anything else about them. If you believe in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, you're part of my America, and you're going to be part of our America in the future.

Well, we've been at this for 4 years now, and the people can make a judgment. And they can also listen to the ideas we have for the future and know there's a darn good chance we can implement them because we've done so much of what we talked about 4 years ago.

On the economy we had a simple strategy: get the deficit down, bring the interest rates down, give tax relief to the people who need it most, expand our sales of American products around the world, invest in science and technology and, most important of all, in the education of our people.

Now, has it worked? Compared to 4 years ago, we have over 10 million new jobs, a record number of small businesses, including businesses owned by women and minorities. We have a 15-year high in homeownership. We have an all-time high in the export of American products. We have an all-time high in the creation of American small businesses.

I can tell you, for the first time in a decade—maybe most important of all to me—average wages are on the rise again. We've been waiting for 10 years to see that start.

The other party always talked about being against the deficit in Government, but in the previous 12 years we increased the debt by 4 times. Since I've been President, we've cut the deficit in each of the last 4 years. It's down by 60 percent. Interest rates are down, investments are up, and the economy is growing. Tell your friends and neighbors in Battle Creek and around this area that we would have a surplus in the budget today and we could have a bigger tax cut if it weren't for the interest we're having to pay on the debt that was run up in the 12 years before I took office. We'd have a surplus.

But we have to do more. We can grow this economy faster, we can create more jobs, we can raise incomes more if we will work hard together. We have to go on and balance the budget to keep the interest rates down, but we have to do it in a way that is different from what our friends in the opposition tried to do last year. We do not have to destroy Medicare or Medicaid or turn our backs on education and the environment or do anything to let the stability of working people's pension funds be eroded. We can balance the budget and protect our values, and that is my commitment to you.

We can also cut taxes for families in America, but the tax cuts need to be targeted to what will do the most good and to something we can pay for—and people like me, who don't need it, shouldn't get them, because we have to balance the budget. We have to balance the budget and cut taxes. And we can do both.

The tax cut should be targeted. We should give a \$500-a-child credit for children under 13. We should give people the right to save in an IRA with incomes going up to family incomes of \$100,000 and then withdraw that money, those savings, without any penalty if they need it for health care, to buy a first-time home, or to pay for a college education. We ought to do that.

We should continue to invest in education. We ought to have a million children in Head Start. We ought to have a million kids working their way through college on work-study.

We ought to preserve my lower cost college loan program, not do away with it as the other party tried to do. And we ought to give people a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition up to \$10,000 a year and a tax credit worth \$1,500, an outright credit, to make sure every person in America can get at least 2 years of education after high school. It ought to be as universal as a high school education is today. We ought to make sure that every classroom in America not only has computers and trained teachers but is hooked up to the information superhighway by the year 2000, every single classroom.

Now, folks, if you're my age and you're not the most computer-literate person in the world, it may be hard to understand what that means. But let me tell you what it means. It means that we now have the chance, for the first time in the history of the United States of America, to make sure that children in the poorest urban classroom, children in the remotest mountain village in America, children in the high plains of the West, children everywhere will have access to the same high quality information in the same time in the same understandable form that children in the wealthiest, best schools in America do. That has never happened before. That is revolutionary.

So that's our opportunity agenda. We also need to continue to fight for responsibility. But look where we are compared to 4 years ago: The crime rate is down, the welfare rolls are down 1½ million, and child support collections are up 40 percent. We're moving in the right direction. Not a single Michigan hunter lost a weapon when the Brady bill passed, even though that's what our friends in the opposition were saying in 1994 to get votes. I don't know why they didn't repeat that in San Diego; I was listening. *[Laughter]* No, nobody lost a weapon in Michigan, but 100,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers have not been able to get handguns because the Brady bill passed.

We're halfway home in putting those 100,000 police on the street. And we have increased funding for safe and drug-free schools and for prevention programs. And, I might add, at a time when about the only thing in this country that is not going in the right direction, I'm sad to say, is teenage to-

bacco and drug use; they've both been going up the last 4 years. I don't think this is a very good time to try to abolish our drug-free schools program. We need more D.A.R.E. officers in those schools. We need more people in those schools trying to keep the kids off drugs in the first place.

But we've got more to do. Very briefly, I think we ought to ban cop-killer bullets. Police officers are—*[inaudible]*—of them. No deer in the Michigan woods is wearing a Kevlar vest. Our police officers are. We ought to protect them; they deserve it. And I think if you commit an act of domestic violence, you also shouldn't be eligible to get another handgun where you can kill somebody.

And I do not believe that we should stop putting 100,000 police on the street. We're halfway home; we need to finish the job. I don't know why our friends are interested in killing the 100,000-police program, but I do know this: More police on the streets, working with their friends and neighbors, knowing the kids, prevent crime in the first place and make it safer. We've got 4 years of a declining crime rate. We know what works. Four more years, and it will be about where it ought to be. Let's keep on going.

In the area of welfare reform, let me just say this: If every person in this country who owes child support paid it, 800,000 women and children would go off welfare tomorrow. We have to keep doing better with that. Now that we have passed the welfare reform legislation, we have guaranteed child care and health care and nutrition to poor children and their families. But if you're going to tell people they've got to be at work within 2 years, they have to have jobs that they can attend. So we now have to create jobs for these people. It is wrong to cut people off and put the kids in the street unless people have jobs as an alternative, and I am committed to that. So that's our responsibility agenda.

Now let me talk a little about what binds us together as a community. First of all, it's our families. Look where we are compared to 4 years ago. Twelve million American families have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law that we passed with the help of people like Carl Levin and Bart

Stupak and over the opposition of the leaders of the other party. Twelve million Americans took a little time off when there was a baby born or a sick parent, and it didn't hurt the economy a bit. We're better off because of it.

And now we just raised the minimum wage for 10 million people. We just made 90 percent of our small businesses eligible for a tax cut if they invest more in the business and made it easier for people in small businesses, where most Americans work, to take out retirement for themselves and their employees and to keep those retirement plans if they change jobs. That's pro-family. And we adopted in the small business bill, in the minimum wage bill, a \$5,000 tax credit for people who adopt a child, more if the child has a disability. There are hundreds of thousands of kids out there that need a good home. I hope more people will adopt now that we have passed this law.

In the area of health care we adopted the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill. You know what it says to 25 million Americans: Okay, now they can't take your health insurance away from you just because somebody in your family has been sick, or if you lose your job or you change jobs you still have a right to keep your health insurance. It can help 25 million of our fellow citizens. That's pro-family.

What we're doing in implementing this rule on tobacco is pro-family. We don't say—we say to adults, you have a right to smoke; you do what you want. It's a legal product. But it's illegal in every State in America to market or sell tobacco products to children, and we're going to do our best to stop it because we want our kids to live longer. That's pro-family.

But we have to do more. On health care we should make it possible for unemployed people not only to keep their insurance as a matter of law but to afford it. My balanced budget plan helps unemployed people keep their health insurance for 6 months. Our balanced budget plan helps families with members with Alzheimer's they're caring for get some respite care. Our balanced budget plan says, among other things, that a mother cannot be forced to leave a hospital in sooner than 48 hours after a baby is born. And I think we have to build on the family and

medical leave law. I think we ought to let people have just a little time off—not a lot, no time for abuse—but a little time off not only for a medical emergency, not only for the birth of a child but to take their children to regular doctor's appointments and to see the teacher once in a great while.

We can't be a strong community unless we have a strong environment. Fifty million Americans are breathing cleaner air than 4 years ago. We've cleaned out more toxic waste dumps in the last 3 years than in the previous 12. We passed the Safe Drinking Water Act, the pesticide protection act. We upgraded the standards for safe meat and poultry. We're moving in the right direction, but we have to do more. And I'll be saying more about this later today, but we need to clean up at least two-thirds of the toxic waste dumps in this country in the next 4 years. We have delayed it long enough.

Let me say again, we have to do these things consistent with our values. We will not be one community if in the name of balancing the budget we give a tax cut that requires us to cut Medicare, stop Medicaid's commitment to families with members with disabilities.

I thought Christopher Reeve was so moving at the Democratic Convention the other night. But let me tell you, he's right about research. We're going to spend more on research, \$1 billion more, because it's important. We have doubled the life expectancy for people with AIDS or HIV infection in just the last 4 years, doubled it because of research. We may be able to extend their lives indefinitely in good, quality ways because of research.

We are about to build a computer with IBM, a supercomputer, because of research, that will do more calculations in a minute than a person with a hand-held calculator could do in 30,000 years. That is what we're getting out of research. He's right. But he's also right—when Christopher Reeve said to me—and I thank these people here for coming to be with us today—Christopher Reeve said, "You know, you've got to make that fight on Medicaid; you can't let them take away Medicaid because not everybody who gets hurt like me has been an actor, has made a good living. And even people like me can

go broke. Middle class families deserve the right to keep working and caring for their family members.”

So, folks, if you believe we're all in this fight together, if you agree with the First Lady that it takes a village and we're all part of it, if you believe that America's best days are ahead, if you want to stay on the right track to the 21st century, will you help us for the next 70 days?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And will you help us for the next 4 years?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. at the Old Train Depot. In his remarks, he referred to Kathy Bloch, coordinator, Calhoun County Tobacco Reduction Coalition; Mark Schauer, Democratic candidate for State representative; Kim Tunncliff, Democratic candidate for U.S. House of Representatives; James J. Blanchard, former Governor of Michigan and former U.S. Ambassador to Canada; and Reverend Albert Thomas, Jr., pastor, Second Missionary Baptist Church, Battle Creek, MI. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in Kalamazoo, Michigan August 28, 1996

The President. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you, thank you, thank you all for being here and for your wonderful reception. Thank you all way over here in the corner for being here in big numbers. And back here. I think we should begin by thanking the Western Michigan University Band. They've been wonderful to us today, and we thank you. Thank you very much.

I want to thank Mayor Barbara Larson and the city and county officials who welcomed us here. I brought a lot of distinguished Michiganders with me: Congressman Bart Stupak and his wife, Laurie, from the Upper Peninsula; former Governor Blanchard, also our former Ambassador to Canada; Frank Garrison, the President of the AFL-CIO in

Michigan; your Attorney General, Frank Kelley, and many others.

I know that before I came here there was another program. I thank Beverly Moore for emceeding it. I thank Linda Comer for what she said and for being a teacher. I thank Tim Eder of the National Wildlife Federation, Michigan Chapter. That's a very important group and a very important part of our commitment to the environment in the future.

Your congressional candidate, Clarence Annen. I'd also like to recognize a Paralympian who is here from your community, a medal winner in the national goal ball team, Sherry Gordon. Congratulations, Sherry. Where are you? There she is. Bless you. Congratulations.

I know that I'm in Comstock Township, right? So I'd like to thank the supervisor, Joe VanBruggen for welcoming us here. And I'd like to thank Kristi Carabula, the county Democratic chair who helped to get a lot of you here. I thank her.

I'd like to thank the community members who are here behind me. First, I want to recognize Representative Ed LaForge. Thank you, Ed, for being here with us. I see you've got some signs here.

I want to thank these young people who are here with me today: the Comstock Boy Scout and Cub Scout Troop and Pack 221; Brownie Troop 624; the Comstock YWCA; community citizen leaders; prime-time program representatives; the Kalamazoo Recycle Rangers—I like that; that sounds good—Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center; Vicksburg High School Adventure Club and FFA; and the Kazoo School. Thank you all for being here.

I want to thank my good friend, Senator Carl Levin, for being here today and supporting the environment in general, and for being America's number one fighter for the Great Lakes and uniform quality standards for the Great Lakes water.

By the way, I'm sure you all know we've still got some work to do on that, so we can use 6 more years of Carl Levin to finish our work on the Great Lakes.

I want to thank Katie McGinty, the Chair of our Environmental Council in the White House. She's done a wonderful job on this and many others things. And most of all, I